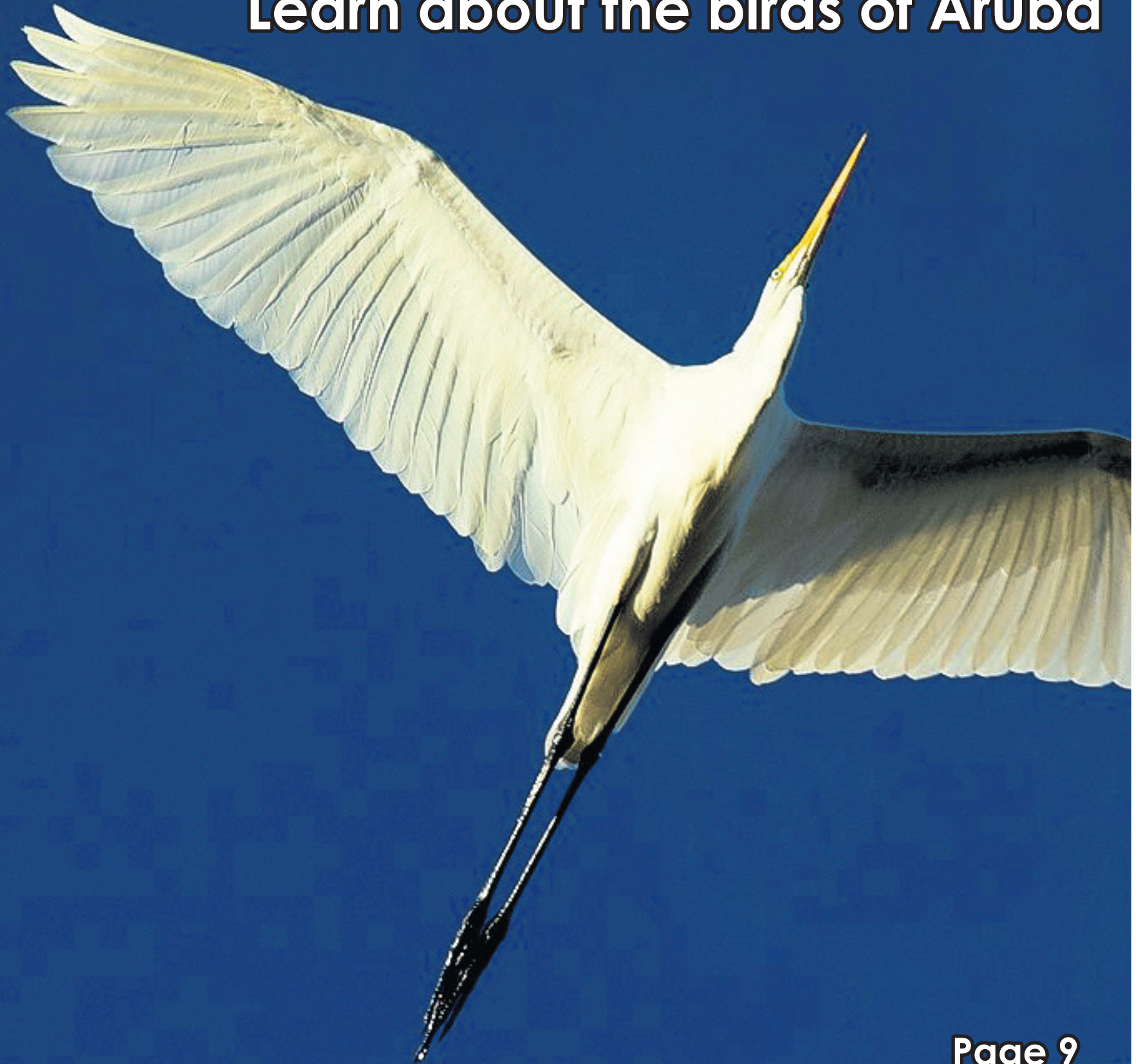




Aruba's ONLY English newspaper

Learn about the birds of Aruba



Page 9

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY



SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITARIST
7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER
4:00 - 6:00pm

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm



WATER'S EDGE
RESTAURANT & BAR



costa linda
beach resort

Happy Hour
12 - 1 / 4 - 6 / 9 - 10

**PREMIUM
BRANDS**

Trump offers a public show of support for Pete Hegseth, his embattled nominee to lead the Pentagon

By COLLEEN LONG

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President-elect Donald Trump on Friday offered a public show of support for Pete Hegseth, his embattled choice to lead the Defense Department, whose confirmation by the Senate is in doubt as he faces questions over allegations of excessive drinking, sexual assault and his views on women in combat.

"Pete Hegseth is doing very well," Trump posted on his social media site.

"He will be a fantastic, high energy, Secretary of Defense." The president added that "Pete is a WINNER, and there is nothing that can be done to change that!!!"

Hegseth, a former Fox News Host, Army National Guard major and combat veteran, spent much of the week on Capitol Hill trying to salvage his Cabinet nomination and reassure Republican senators that he is fit to lead Trump's Pentagon.

The effort has quickly become a test of Trump's clout and of how far loyalty for the president-elect goes with Republican senators who have concerns about his nominees. Trump has already met some resistance.



Pete Hegseth, President-elect Donald Trump's nominee to be defense secretary, responds to reporters during a meeting with Sen. Mike Rounds, R-S.D., a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2024.

Two of his other choices have stepped aside as they faced intense scrutiny: former congressman Matt Gaetz, his first choice for attorney general; and Chad Chronister, a Florida sheriff who was Trump's first choice to lead the Drug Enforcement Administration. Vice President-elect JD Vance also made a show of support for Hegseth on Friday, part of a full-court press by members of Trump's Make America Great Again movement.

"If you're a GOP Senator who voted for Lloyd Austin, but criticize @PeteHegseth, then maybe you're in the wrong political party!" Vance wrote on X. Hegseth has promised not to drink on the job and told lawmakers he never engaged in sexual misconduct, even as his professional views on female troops have also come under intensifying scrutiny. He said as recently as last month that women "straight up" should not serve in combat.

Two female senators, Republican Joni Ernst of Iowa and Democrat Tammy Duckworth of Illinois, sit on the Armed Services Committee. Both are combat veterans who served in the Iraq war, and Duckworth lost both legs when a Blackhawk helicopter she was piloting was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. Ernst, who is also a sexual assault survivor, stopped short of an endorsement after her meeting with Hegseth this week. She said she ap-

preciates his military service and they "had a frank and thorough conversation."

Hegseth has yet to meet with Duckworth.

Trump's transition team has been looking at potential replacements if Hegseth's nomination cannot move forward, including former Trump rival Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

DeSantis plans to attend the Army-Navy football game with Trump on Dec. 14, according to a person familiar with the Florida governor's plans who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity to discuss them before a public announcement.

DeSantis and Trump had spoken about the defense secretary post when they saw each other Tuesday at a memorial service for sheriff deputies in West Palm Beach, Florida, according to people familiar with the matter who said Trump was interested in DeSantis for the post, and the governor was receptive.

DeSantis also is poised to select a replacement for the expected Senate vacancy to be created by Marco Rubio becoming secretary of state, and Trump's daughter-in-law Lara Trump is seen as the preferred choice by those in Trump's orbit. □

Associated Press

Melania Trump says heading to the White House for the second term is much different than the first

By COLLEEN LONG

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Soon-to-be first lady Melania Trump said Friday that preparing to enter the White House for the second time looks a lot different from the first go-around. Now, she and her husband know what to expect.

"You know what you need to establish, you know what kind of people you need to hire for your office," she said on "Fox & Friends" in a rare television appearance, where she showed off holiday ornaments she's selling and her memoir as Christmas approaches. She said the pace has been fast, as Donald Trump works to build his administration: "It's incredible and we are very, very busy." She's packing up so "we can start on Day 1."

She said her husband's attitude after his

2024 win was not the same as when he won in 2016. "The country and the people really supported him," she said. "I think the energy is different. People around him are different."

The incoming first lady also praised her 18-year-old son Barron, crediting him with helping his father find new ways to reach the audience that elected him president. Trump has four other children.

"He is a grown young man, I'm very proud of him about his knowledge, even about politics and giving advice to his father," she said.

"He brought in so many young people. He knows his generation."

She described working on her memoirs as a process that was "very personal and could be sometimes very joyful, but also traumatic and hard." □



First lady Melania Trump arrives in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, June 26, 2017.

Associated Press

Judge upholds use of race in Naval Academy admissions, saying a diverse military is stronger

By LEA SKENE

Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — A federal judge on Friday ruled that the U.S. Naval Academy can continue considering race in its admissions process, ruling that military cohesion and other national security factors mean the officer training school should not be subjected to the same standards as civilian universities.

During a two-week bench trial in September, attorneys for the school argued that prioritizing diversity in the military makes it stronger, more effective and more widely respected.

The group behind the case, Students for Fair Admissions, also brought the lawsuit challenging affirmative action that resulted in a landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling last year. The high court's conservative majority broadly prohibited the consideration of race and ethnicity in college admissions, ending a long-standing practice meant to boost opportunities for historically marginalized groups and sending shockwaves through higher education. But it carved out a potential exemption for military academies, suggesting that national security



An entrance to the U.S. Naval Academy campus in Annapolis, Md., is seen Jan. 9, 2014.

Associated Press

interests could affect the legal analysis.

Students for Fair Admissions later sued the Annapolis-based Naval Academy challenging the exemption.

But Judge Richard Bennett rejected their arguments in a lengthy opinion released Friday. A George W. Bush appointee who served for over 20 years in the U.S. Army Reserve and the Maryland National Guard, Bennett wrote that the

school had "established a compelling national security interest in a diverse officer corps."

"Specifically, the Academy has tied its use of race to the realization of an officer corps that represents the country it protects and the people it leads," he wrote. "The Academy has proven that this national security interest is indeed measurable and that its admissions program is narrowly tailored to meet that interest."

Bennett noted that demographics are a minor factor in Naval Academy admissions no one is admitted solely on the basis of race. He also noted that Students for Fair Admissions includes among its membership "four individuals whose prior applications to the U.S. Naval Academy were denied."

In a statement Friday, President Edward Blum said the group would appeal the decision.

"It is our hope that the U.S. military academies ultimately will be compelled to follow the Supreme Court's prohibition of race in college admissions," he said.

Attorneys for the group argued during trial that prioritizing minority candidates is unfair to qualified white applicants and that cohesion should arise from other factors such as training and command structure.

The group also sued West Point last year, but the Naval Academy case was the first case to go to trial.

Witness testimony included accounts from current and former high-ranking military officials who expressed varying opinions on how race affects the experiences of service members and the organization as a whole. Some argued that performance standards alone should be used to evaluate candidates while others emphasized the importance of fostering diversity.

The court also heard from historians who described the military's fraught history of racial tension, which on some occasions erupted into violence and jeopardized its wartime readiness. □

Outgoing DNC chair Jaime Harrison pushes back against critics of 'identity politics'

By JONATHAN J. COOPER

Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (AP) — Democratic National Committee Chairman Jaime Harrison delivered a steadfast defense of his party's commitment to racial equity Thursday, drawing on his own identity as a Black man to push back forcefully against critics who say Democrats need to abandon "identity politics."

People of color need to see Democrats fighting for them, and that "cannot be the excuse for why we win or lose," Harrison said in a passionate speech to state Democratic chairs meeting

in Arizona.

"When I wake up in the morning, when I look in the mirror, when I step out the door, I can't rub this off," he said, waving his hand in front of his face. "This is who I am. This is how the world perceives me."

"That is my identity," he continued. "And it is not politics. It is my life. And the people that I need in the party, that I need to stand up for me, have to recognize that. You cannot run away from that."

Harrison's four-year tenure will end early next year. He twice suggested he has more grievances he's itching

to get off his chest, saying "the muzzle comes off" the day after his replacement is elected on Feb. 1. He has no plans to endorse a replacement.

"That's it for you all," Harrison said later as he wrapped up his speech. "Because I'm saving the rest for my book. And I am naming names."

Democrats are having a fierce debate over the reasons Vice President Kamala Harris lost decisively to President-elect Donald Trump and the path forward for a party that will be locked out of the White House and Congressional ma-

jorities. Some have argued the party has become too politically correct and

overly focused on appealing to voters based on their identity. □



Democratic Party chair Jaime Harrison speaks during a rally for Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris at the Reno Events Center, Oct. 31, 2024, in Reno, Nev.

Associated Press

The first rioter tried on Jan. 6 charges gets reduced prison sentence after Supreme Court decision

By **MICHAEL KUNZELMAN**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Texas man who was the first rioter to go on trial for the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol was resentenced on Friday to nearly seven years in prison after he delivered an angry, profane rant to the judge who agreed to modestly reduce his original sentence.

Guy Refitt benefitted from a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that led to the dismissal of his conviction on an obstruction charge. His new sentence six years and eight months is seven months lower than his original sentence.

Refitt repeatedly shook his head and appeared to be agitated as he listened to U.S. District Judge Dabney Friedrich and a prosecutor describe his role in a mob's attack on the Capitol. He told the judge that he was "in my feelings" and upset about the "lies and the craziness" that he perceived. "I was not there to take over no government," Refitt said. "I love this country." "No one has a problem with your feelings," the judge



This artist sketch depicts Guy Wesley Refitt, joined by his lawyer William Welch in Federal Court, in Washington, Feb. 28, 2022.

Associated Press

said. "It's the actions you took with your feelings." Refitt stormed the Capitol with a holstered handgun on his waist. He also was carrying zip-tie handcuffs and wearing body armor and a helmet equipped with a video camera when he advanced on police officers outside the building.

He retreated after an officer pepper sprayed him in the face, but he waved on other rioters who ultimately breached the building. Prosecutors said Refitt told fellow members of the Texas Three Percenters militia group that he planned to drag House Speaker Nancy Pelosi out of the Cap-

itol building by her ankles, "with her head hitting every step on the way down." "His objective was to overtake Congress, physically and with violence," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Nestler. "In his own words," Nestler added, "Congress was the demon and he was going

to cut the head off the demon."

Refitt is one of several Jan. 6 defendants to be resentenced after a Supreme Court ruling in June limited the government's use of a federal obstruction law. The high court ruled 6-3 that a charge of obstructing an official proceeding must include proof that a defendant tried to tamper with or destroy documents a distinction that applies to few Jan. 6 criminal cases.

A jury convicted Refitt of four other counts, including a charge that he threatened his two teenage children after returning to their home in Wylie, Texas, after the riot. Refitt's son Jackson, then 19, testified that his father told him and his younger sister, then 16, that they would be traitors if they reported him to authorities and warned them that "traitors get shot."

Refitt's two daughters spoke favorably of their father during his resentencing. They described him as a caring father who doesn't pose a danger to anybody. □

Wind-driven brushfire at Baltimore wood recycling yard closes expressway, light rail, schools

BALTIMORE (AP) — Firefighters were battling a massive, wind-driven brushfire at a Baltimore wood recycling yard that closed a section of the expressway into the city's downtown, the neighboring light rail line and nearby roads and schools on Friday morning.

Crews were called to the Camp Small yard, where large trees and logs are stacked about 30 feet (about nine meters) high, after 5 p.m. Thursday, Baltimore City Fire Chief James Wallace said at a briefing. "When they got here, they discovered a rapidly evol-

ving fire that was in a large pile of trees and logs in a large area," Wallace said. "This stage is just that, lots of trees, logs, stumps and things like that." About 100 to 125 firefighters were battling the fire. Wallace said it was a challenge because the flames were fueled by high winds. He said firefighters planned to use heavy equipment to cut a ring around the fire once they had more control.

"It's very, very difficult for us to get out ahead of it," Wallace said. Firefighters gained the upper hand Thursday night, and on Friday morning the fire was contained.

Air quality in parts of the city was in the moderate range on Friday morning because of smoke from the

fire. People sensitive to air pollution should consider avoiding outdoor activities, the Maryland Department of the Environment said in a social media post. Baltimore City Fire Department spokesman John Marsh said the smoke was dying down, allowing officials to reopen Interstate 83, which runs from downtown Baltimore to areas north of the city. Officials announced before 9 a.m. that the northbound and southbound lanes had reopened.

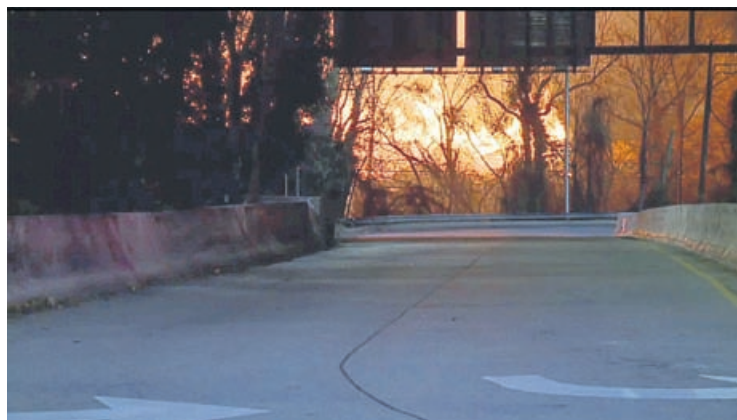
Two nearby high schools were closed Friday, Mayor Brandon Scott said at a briefing. And fireworks were canceled at an annual holiday celebration in downtown Baltimore on Thursday evening.

Marsh said no injuries had been reported even as crews spent all night working to battle the fire, which grew rapidly because of weather conditions and the enormous concentration of dry wood.

The recycling yard is filled with logs, branches and other tree waste that city crews remove from Baltimore streets, sidewalks and parks. Much of the wood is later turned into lumber and mulch or sold to local builders.

"It was the largest bonfire I've ever seen in my life," Marsh said.

He said the cause remains under investigation. Officials haven't provided a timeline for when the fire could be fully extinguished. □



A brushfire burns at a Baltimore wood recycling yard late Thursday, Dec. 5, 2024.

Associated Press

European Union and Mercosur trade bloc announce free trade deal that's 25 years in the making

By GUILLERMO GARAT and ISABEL DEBRE

Associated Press

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay

(AP) — The European Union on Friday finalized a blockbuster free trade agreement with Brazil, Argentina and three other South American nations in the Mercosur trade alliance, a long-awaited breakthrough despite fierce opposition from France that caps a quarter-century of on-off negotiations.

The accord would create a market of over 700 million people, nearly 25% of the world's gross domestic product, and save businesses an estimated 4 billion euros (\$4.26 billion) in duties each year.

From Uruguay, the host of the Mercosur summit, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hailed the deal which would create one of the largest free trade zones in the world as a "truly historic milestone" at a time when global protectionism is on the rise.

Provided it is ratified, the deal promises benefits especially to European manufacturers and South American farmers, slashing red tape and removing tariffs on products like Italian wine, Argentine steak, Brazilian oranges and German Volkswagens.

"This agreement is not just an economic opportunity, it is a political necessity," said von der Leyen, who negotiated the agreement on behalf of the 27 EU member countries. As talks approached the finish line, von der Leyen traveled to Uruguay's capital of Montevideo on Thursday for the gathering of the Mercosur nations.

In addition to the region's biggest economies, Brazil and Argentina, the trade alliance also includes Uruguay, Paraguay and, newly, Bolivia.

The deal represents the first big trade pact for the Mercosur group, which in the past had only managed to conclude free-trade deals with Egypt, Israel and Singapore.

But all 27 EU member coun-



From left: Argentina's President Javier Milei, Uruguay President Luis Lacalle Pou, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Paraguay's President Santiago Pena pose for a picture during the Mercosur Summit in Montevideo, Uruguay, Friday, Dec. 6, 2024.

Associated Press

tries must endorse the agreement for it to enter force. Complete ratification will take time, and will not be easy.

France leads a group of member countries that still oppose the pact. President Emmanuel Macron, mindful of his country's vocal and powerful farming lobby, has previously described the deal on the table as unacceptable and disastrous for French farmers and industry.

It's unclear whether his objections shared by Poland, Austria and the Netherlands have been addressed in the agreement finalized on Friday.

In remarks addressing her "fellow Europeans," and perhaps especially French skeptics, von der Leyen promised the accord would boost some 60,000 companies that export to the Mercosur region.

"This will create huge business opportunities," von der Leyen said, mentioning "reduced tariffs, simpler customs procedures and preferential access to some critical raw materials."

"And to our farmers," she added, "we have heard you listen to your concerns, and we are acting on them. This agreement includes robust safeguards

to protect your livelihoods." Germany, with its huge car industry, Spain and other member states that have pushed hard for the agreement for years praised the announcement.

"An important obstacle to the agreement has been overcome," German Chancellor Olaf Scholz wrote on social media platform X, saying the deal would create "more growth and competitiveness."

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez called the agreement "an unprecedented economic bridge between Europe and Latin America."

He said Spain would work hard to ensure the agreement is approved "because trade openness with our Latin American friends will make us all more prosperous and resilient."

Mercosur nations are excited about selling more beef and agricultural products in the EU. But farming communities in Europe have balked at the prospect of cheap food imports from South America, claiming they would damage competition and lower safety standards in the bloc.

A massive European farmers' protest movement has gripped the continent for much of the past year. En-

vironmental groups, including Greenpeace, warn it could accelerate deforestation in the Amazon and increase the use of harmful pesticides.

The deal is the product of 25 years of painstaking negotiations, dating back to a Mercosur summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1999. Talks repeatedly fell apart over differences in economic priorities, regulatory standards and agricultural policies. Protectionist tendencies in various administrations on both sides of the Atlantic also upended hopes of a quick deal.

Momentum picked up in 2016, as former President Donald Trump imposed stiff tariffs on Europe and market-friendly leaders championing free trade took over the notoriously closed economies of Argentina and Brazil. In June 2019, negotiators announced a deal that included provisions for tariff reductions and commitments to environmental standards.

But new obstacles including the election of populist former President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, the biggest of the five Mercosur members, and European concerns over deforestation in the Amazon soon scuttled those plans. Since returning

to power in 2023, left-wing President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Bolsonaro's successor, accelerated talks with the bloc even while raising concerns about protection for the Brazilian auto industry.

Lula on Friday hailed the agreement as an important victory.

"The deal establishes spaces for dialogue that will allow greater coordination between the two regions on these and other issues," his office said. "In addition to the expected economic and commercial gains, Mercosur and the European Union share common values and interests."

President Javier Milei of Argentina, a libertarian economist elected a year ago on a vow to overhaul the crisis-stricken economy with free-market principles, has also supported the deal previously opposed by his left-wing predecessor.

The pact must also be endorsed by the European Parliament, but that step is not expected to be controversial.

Senior lawmakers immediately welcomed the announcement, saying that it "marks a significant milestone in advancing inter-regional cooperation between the European Union and Mercosur."

But some aren't popping the champagne quite yet. The deal's ratification could take years if past EU trade agreements are any indication.

The EU and Canada signed a pact, formally known as the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA, in late 2016 and the approval process has lumbered along since then. Germany's parliament only formally signed off two years ago, and the French Senate rejected it in March this year, sending it back to France's lower house of parliament for further discussion.

"Anyone with any memory is skeptical," said Brian Winter, a vice president at the New York-based Americas Society/Council of the Americas. □

South Korea's opposition leader questions President Yoon's state of mind after martial law chaos

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM**

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) —

South Korea's opposition leader questioned the state of mind of President Yoon Suk Yeol and vowed to make all-out efforts to get him impeached soon, saying Friday that Yoon's controversial martial law imposition this week showed he could make other extreme moves on vital issues.

"A more dangerous part of the martial law case is the state of mind of the president who decided to do something that no one understands, rather than the fact that he did it," Lee Jae-myung, leader of the liberal opposition Democratic Party, told The Associated Press in an interview. "There is a high possibility that he could do totally incomprehensible things on security, defense, economy and foreign affairs issues."

Yoon's controversial martial law imposition on Tuesday night lasted only six hours before it was overturned by the opposition-controlled parliament in a unanimous vote and was lifted by Yoon before daybreak Wednesday. But the



South Korea's main opposition Democratic Party leader Lee Jae-myung, bottom center, shouts slogans during a joint press conference with members of civil society and the five opposition parties to condemn the ruling People Power Party at the National Assembly in Seoul, South Korea, Friday, Dec. 6, 2024. The signs read "Impeach Yoon Suk Yeol."

Associated Press

short-lived declaration is threatening to plunge the country into a political turmoil and tarnishing its international image.

In his martial law announcement, Yoon cited the need to eliminate "shameless North Korea followers and anti-state forces." But it's still unclear why Yoon pressed ahead with martial law when it was obvious

that it would be rejected by the National Assembly. Some experts say Yoon likely hoped to divert public attentions away from a spate of scandals involving himself and his wife.

In response to questions by the AP about Lee's comments, the presidential office said that Yoon has no problems in handling state affairs and making deci-

sions and he is performing his duties normally.

Yoon hasn't made any public appearance since he announced he was lifting martial law, though his office said Thursday the president replaced his defense minister, who was believed to have recommended the martial law decree to Yoon.

Lee's Democratic Party

and other small opposition parties are pushing for a parliamentary vote on an impeachment motion on Yoon on Saturday to suspend his presidential power and responsibility. They call Yoon's martial law "unconstitutional, illegal rebellion or coup."

But they need backing from some members of the governing People Power Party to reach the two-thirds majority required to pass the impeachment motion. If approved, the Constitutional Court is to determine whether to remove him from office or restore his presidential power. Opinion surveys showed that Lee, who lost the 2022 presidential election to Yoon by a razor-thin margin, is the favorite to succeed Yoon in the 2027 race, despite facing several court trials over corruption and other charges. Earlier Friday, Han Dong-hun, leader of the ruling People Power Party, raised the need to suspend Yoon's presidential power swiftly, saying he poses a "significant risk of extreme actions, like reattempting to impose martial law."

Under assault by gangs in Haiti, a Kenyan-led mission fights back

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— An armored vehicle carrying Kenyan police rumbles through Haiti's capital with a shattered window that a high-caliber bullet

failed to penetrate, a permanent sign of violence the officers face almost daily in Port-au-Prince.

The Kenyans, who were deployed to Haiti earlier this

year to help quell gang violence, have faced relentless attacks.

On Thursday, gunfire erupted in Port-au-Prince as Kenyan officers repelled heavily armed gangs that run 85% of the city and are fighting to seize full control. The Kenyans, joined by Haitian officers, crouched behind sandbags and a concrete wall at the former offices of the National Police that authorities were forced to abandon in recent years by encroaching gangs. Bullets whizzed by as police kept their heads down and returned fire. "The days are numbered for the gangs," Godfrey Otunge, commander of the United Nations-backed mission led by Kenya, told The Associated Press. "Ei-

ther you surrender ... or we are coming for you."

Police face a daunting task. More than 4,500 people have been reported killed in Haiti so far this year, and another 2,060 injured, according to the U.N.

Gang violence also has displaced an estimated 700,000 people in recent years as gunmen burn and pillage communities in a push to control more territory. A growing number of people have criticized the Kenyan-led mission, noting that police have not seized control of gang strongholds nor arrested any gang leaders.

On patrol in their heavily armored vehicle, one of its windows previously damaged by a bullet strike, police returned fire with smoke

rising from their automatic weapons.

The vehicle lumbered past charred cars, makeshift blockades and the body of a person burned to death, the skull poking through a burned fire.

Last week alone, some 42,000 people were left homeless, half of them children, according to UNICEF, the U.N. children's agency. An estimated six million people, including 3.3 million children, will need humanitarian aid next year, the agency said.

Gang violence worsened last month as the United States and other countries pushed for a U.N. peace-keeping mission, noting that the current Kenyan-led mission lacks resources and funding.



A Kenyan police officer part of a UN-backed multinational force runs to take cover from an exchange of gunfire between gangs and police at a Kenyan police base in the Delmas neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2024.

Associated Press

Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!



(Oranjestad)—If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last gla-

cial period.

On May 30 2023, geoscientists, Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their research on these

fossilized coral reefs at the University of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly



put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times in the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine. As the scientists themselves have pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide a clear view of how these reefs have formed.

This research is also important for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate impact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserving our coral reefs. So, if you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen! ☐

Lessons from our elders:

Plants and fruits for medicinal use (part 2)

(Oranjestad)—In last week's edition, we shared with our readers some medicinal use for plants and fruits, passed down from our elders through generations. This week, we present two more uses of fruits and plants for medicinal use.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it's been

said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest.



Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw the seeds

on the ground, they could grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. According to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes.

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris ☐



Celebrating Forty Years - 1,600,000 Point Giveaway Every Friday, Saturday & Sunday



Super 4-Card BINGO
starting at 1pm!

\$7 for 4-Card BINGO | 8 Games to Play

\$1,500 in Cash Prizes

SPECIAL PROGRESSIVE GAME
Jackpot within 50 Calls | 51 Calls or more \$111

Additional \$500 Cash Prize in our
Monthly Early Bird Drawing when you
purchase your card before noon!

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Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Bucuti& Tara Beach Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:
Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors
Mr. Rick & Mrs. Camille White from Mount Sinai

New York, United States.

Ms. Marouska Heyliger representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Bucuti& Tara Beach Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's weather.
- Aruba's restaurants.
- "The feeling of safety & security on the island"
- "Making friends every time we are here"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □



Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history

if you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within walking distance from one another.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here

you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the home of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next to tableaus of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment. Carnival Euphoria is showcasing Aruba's Carnival. See how are Carnival has developed over the past 65 years.

The new San Nicolas

In the shadow of the refinery, an art capital is quietly beginning to grow. This is the new San Nicolas, a place that is starting to become a magnet for all that is young, cool and hip in Aruba. Indeed, San Nicolas has all of the ingredients of an

emerging cultural hub — varied history, interesting architecture, and, perhaps most importantly, an urban layout that makes it walkable. As you walk around, the streets are silent but the walls are loud, filled with bright, colorful murals painted by a collection of artists from around the world. Thanks to the efforts of various art organizations in Aruba, such as Art Rules Aruba and Aruba Art Fair, San Nicolas has had quite the aesthetic makeover with regards to vibrant street art. Each year more and more stunning murals are replacing broken down buildings with colorful art pieces that keep brightening up Sunrise City.

Must See, Do, Buy & Eat

A little bit of everything can be found in the main street. Stores selling shoes, clothing, jewelry you name it. Arts & crafts by Cosecha store & Creative Center, a design store in which you can immerse yourself in discovering genuine and locally made arts and crafts which reflect the diversification of the Aruban craft heritage and the artistic supply of artisans. Don't miss out on trying the exquisite food offered by the cafes and restaurants or just enjoy a peaceful walk admiring the murals, mosaic benches and all the history San Nicolas has to offer. □

Celebrating Forty Years - 1,600,000 Point Giveaway Every Friday, Saturday & Sunday

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Get a **FREE** Alhambra T-Shirt when you earn **250 Slot Points** on Sunday with your **Players' Club card!**

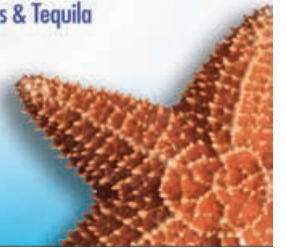
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Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Insta-

gram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. For today we received a lovely message from Christina Teufel.

She wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is my home away from home, where my friends and family come together to create unforgettable memories on this beautiful island. The stunning beaches, vibrant culture, and warm-hearted people make every visit feel like a special retreat. It's a place filled with laughter, love, and the joy of shared experiences, making it truly a second home in my heart."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

Birds of Aruba

ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful

pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and descriptions from the foundation's Facebook page.

The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful

things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory.

English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male)
Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje).

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect. □



Place names in San Nicolas and their origins

(Oranjestad)--If you're ever taking a tour of Aruba, San Nicolas would definitely be on your itinerary. From relaxing on the white, sandy beaches of Baby and Roger's Beach, to exploring the prehistoric caves of Quadirikiri and Fontein, you are taking in a full view of what San Nicolas has to offer. But did you know that you are also passing through areas whose names have historical origins? Here are a few place names in San Nicolas and their origin story.

Sero Colorado

On your way to Baby or Roger's Beach, you'll pass by the famous Red Anchor at what was once the entrance to the Colony residential community and be greeted with red soiled hills by the coast. This is Sero Colorado. Named after the 30-meter, deep red, limestone hill, "Sero Colorado" translates to "Colored Hill". Sero Colorado has deep historical ties with the once-thriving phosphate industry in the area. Matter of fact,



there are still underground shafts and passages deep in Sero Colorado from the time of phosphate mining. In 1958, the refinery at the time, Lago, adopted this name for the residential section of its employees.

Vader Piet

Another well visited area, Vader Piet is located in the Arikok National Park. Recognizable sites within this area

includes the Wind Mills and the Quadirikiri Cave. The origin of this name is part historical and speculation, as there are slight deviations from what actually happened.

In 1829, Pieter Lampe was a planter and the person responsible for governing this remote area. As the

story goes, Pieter was well known and beloved for his kindness and good treatment of his employees, and was therefore also called Vader Piet (Father Piet). However, he was tragically murdered—some speculate at the hands of a slave. For his work and good heart, the area was named after him.

San Nicolas

Of course we can't forget San Nicolas itself. Much like Vader Piet, the origin of the name San Nicolas has so far two different accounts. In the literal sense, "San Nicolas" translates to "Saint Nicolas", leading many to believe that this district was named after a Spanish saint. Though one account does support this with the theory that the district was named after the saint by Spanish colonizers, the other account is much less divine, but does refer to an influential figure in the area.

Nicolaas van der Biest was a successful landowner during the time of the phosphate boom in late 19th century Aruba. Back then, landowners (most, if not all of them men) were referred to as "Shon" by their subordinates. So, the district was originally named after Shon Nicolaas. Over time, the name evolved into what is now San Nicolas.

Source: "Aruba: Short History" by Dr. J. Hartog.

Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our Picuda!

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Picuda", a very common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Picuda.

Let's talk about the names of fish. Do you know your fish? This is an informative article that illustrate some fish and their names in Papiamentu, which the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, known as "Santa Rosa", wants to share and also obtain information from the public.

Picuda, Sphyræna barracuda, Greater Barracuda

Well known is the Picuda on the island—Barracuda in English. Its scientific name is Sphyræna barracuda. It is a widely caught fish. It is found throughout the year in our waters, where it is a

so-called "ambush predator" that stays still or floats in the water waiting for its prey to approach so it can attack it with lightning speed. It is well known for fishermen, especially for its white flesh in fish soup. In fishing culture, there are many other names, such as Pecho blanco, Blekito, Banana, or Bleki. The names

vary according to size.

Description

The Picuda is a long fish, with a round body like a torpedo and silver in color with shiny black stripes. Below, that is, the belly, is whiter, while the top part is darker. Its snout is very pointed, and the lower jaw is longer than the upper

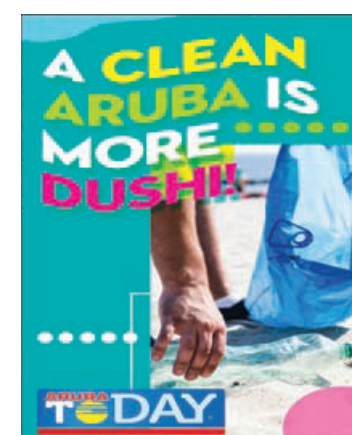
one. Its peduncle, where the body meets the tail, is thick, while the tail also forms a crescent but in this case one more "full" than that of mullet or conefish. This reflects the hunting style of the Picuda. It needs to be able to accelerate quickly when the prey gets close.



In Aruba:

Picuda can be found in our waters around our island throughout the year. Picuda, in our waters, is edible without any problem. Picuda is also a highly sought-after fish by sports fishermen or recreational fishermen because it puts up a good fight once hooked. It can be caught via trolling from a boat, casting from shore with a line or rod, or by jigging, casting the lure (artificial bait) and moving it with certain rod motions.

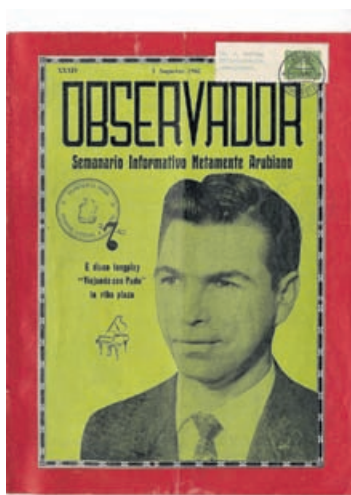
Picture courtesy of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.



Meet our Aruban trailblazers: Padu Lampe

(Oranjestad)—This week we remember one of our most beloved Aruban giant, Juan Chabaya Lampe—better known as Padu Lampe or Padu del Caribe. As one of the most important and renowned artists in the Aruban cultural sphere, Padu's long career led him to be honored today as "the father of culture."

On April 26th, 1920, Juan Chabaya Lampe "Padu Lampe/Padu del Caribe" was born in Nassastraat, Oranjestad. He grew up in a happy musical environment, and it is because of this that he developed a love for music. Starting from the



age of 12, he was agile in the clarinet, mandolin and cuatro. Henry Lampe, his father, was also a well-known pianist and musician. In a publication of the informative seminar, "Observer",

from August 1st, 1962, Padu's many merits and friendly personality stood out. It was said that he was an excellent pianist with a personal style and full of surprises. Secondly, though the composer was not too familiar with music theory, he showed innovations in his compositions. Lastly, Padu was a promoter of Creole music around the world.

One of the most important moments in Aruban history, in which he was able to witness first-hand, was the first radio broadcast on the island on March 20th, 1954. Here, he was accompanied by Antillean guitarist Julian Coco and Hubert "Loi" Booi.

In the art world, Padu was also a known painter. During his youth, he made several paintings using his unique style. In 1939, he participated in an art exhibit in New York, where he won a bronze medal for his painting "Typical View of Aruba."

Padu remained a popular artist within the Dutch Antilles and the Caribbean as a pianist, singer, author and painter. Padu Lampe was a local artist who became renowned in Venezuela,

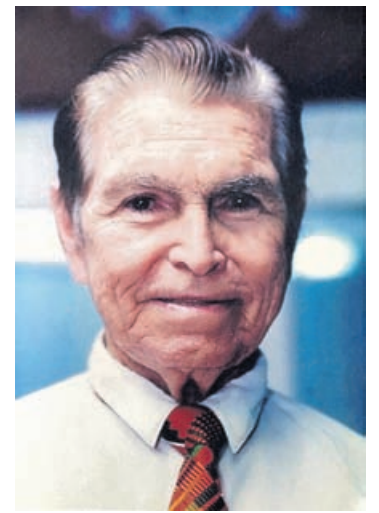
Colombia, The U.S. and The Netherlands too. In the 1950s, he sold no less than 50 thousand copies of his long-playing albums (LPs).

Padu Lampe was a multifaceted artist, inspired by his interest in parapsychology and supernatural phenomenon. He wrote three books in Papiamentu on the subject in 1986, which was published by the Aruban National Printing Press with sponsorship provided by the Prince Bernhard Funds Netherlands Antilles.

Besides that, Padu passed his exam on "Society to Advanced Ethical Hypnosis" in 1964 in New Jersey. He received a certificate as a hypnotechnician, which gave him the authority to practice hypnosis in some states.

Over the course of his career, he received many accolades and awards in Aruba, Curacao, Venezuela and the Netherlands.

Padu del Caribe passed away on November 29th, 2019, at the age of 99 years old. Padu brought the Aruban culture around the world. His legacy will remain ingrained in the Aruban cul-



tural history, and he will be known forever as one of the most influential trailblazers of our community.

Padu will always be in Aruba's heart, because he had composed various special songs dedicated to the mothers of the island; his song "Sonrisa di un baby" ("A baby's Smile") has been written in three different languages. Padu also wrote our national anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera", along with Mr. Rufo Wever. This song was approved by the government of Aruba and was named the official anthem of the island in 1976. Other songs that have been considered as being almost a second anthem for Arubans is the special composition he wrote for his wife Daisy Croes called "Abo so". Daisy later passed away in 1994. □



Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Anabui/Tierra Del Sol

This neighborhood can be seen on Van Raders map and Werbata as Anna Boei. Anna Boei is a name of



which there isn't much information about its origin.

The best historians were able to deduce is that this name came to be because of a miscommunication between Van Spengler and the natives who were living on the island. In the Arawak/Taino language one can find the word Anaiboa, which consists of Ana meaning flower or the best and lboa; the juice of a cassava, which together would mean "the best juice of a cassava".

If one assumes that the actual word heard was Anaboio instead, consisting of Ana meaning the best and Boio (bohio); house, the itera-

tion of Anabui would mean "the best house." This is the origin that has been more or less speculated and assumed for the word Anabui and it's meaning.

During the second world war and later, this area was used as a terrain for training of shooting by militia and later on Korps Mariniers (the marines of Aruba). By the end of the previous century a large part of Anabui was developed to have luxurious villas and a golf course, which lead to it getting the name Tierra Del Sol, Spanish for Land of the Sun. The name is not an official name, but the name of the development project that took place. It is hoped that the original and 'old'

name of Anabui is never lost and now it will be remembered by both locals and tourists.

Angochi

This name can be seen on the Werbata map with little and cursive letters. It is the unofficial name for the area given by a tenant to the land that was rented to him.

The biggest probability that historians believe is that it comes from native descent, during the time in the 19th century where Mestizos still lived on Aruba. The name can't really be explain and according to books on its history seems to be more of a sign of corruption.

However, it seems to come from combining A(n), which is a generalizing prefix and Goeiza, which means 'the spirit of a living man'. Angochi remains more of a guess.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; An.

CROSSWORD

By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

ACROSS 45 Tenant's fee

1 Massage target

5 Hams' needs

11 Sound of agony

12 To-do list

13 Shed feathers

14 Struck out

15 "The Mikado," for one

17 Oxygen: Prefix

18 Chaser of Bugs

22 Patisserie array

24 Long attack

25 One — kind

26 Sinking signal

27 Corbin Bernsen series

30 Wild party

32 Vestige

33 Gun, as a motor

34 Neighbor-ing

38 Wee amount

41 Pine or palm

42 Depends

43 Balder's father

44 Finally

DOWN

1 Clip

contents

2 Hen pen

3 National park in Hawaii

4 Menu choice

5 River floater

6 Some marbles

7 National park in Alaska

8 Tavern

9 Pindar poem

10 Blue

16 Hosp. parts

19 National park in Colorado

20 Big heads

21 Take a breather

22 Future stallion

23 Miles off

28 National park in Maine

29 Cheese buys

30 Lingerie item

31 Church reader

35 Witty remark

36 German denial

37 Circus sight

38 Mrs., in Madrid

39 Ran into

40 Suffering

M	A	T	H		E	S	C	R	O	W
E	C	R	U		E	Q	U	I	N	E
S	E	A	M		R	U	B	B	E	D
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			E	L	D	E	R		D	A
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I	N	O	N			I	D	E	A	
E	N	I	A	C		C	R	E	S	T
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M	A	L	I	C	E		U	G	L	Y
A	G	E	O	L	D		S	O	O	N
R	O	O	N	E	Y		A	N	T	E

Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12					
13					14					
15					16					
			17				18		19	20
22	23						24			
25								26		
27				28	29		30	31		
32							33			
			34		35				36	37
38	39	40						41		
42								43		
44								45		

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-7

CRYPTOQUOTE

W NSZZNC AXMC GEB, W
NSZZNC AXMC NXTC, W
NSZZNC AXMC NSPUZ CTCMI
BSPUZ. ZUWZ'L ZUC YXI XG
UWBERRWU. — EBRBXFB

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: GRATITUDE MAKES
SENSE OF OUR PAST, BRINGS PEACE FOR TODAY,
AND CREATES A VISION FOR TOMORROW.
— MELODY BEATTIE

Cruise ship Schedule: December 01 - 08 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
SUN	01	EXPLORER OF THE SEAS - dept. OCEANIA SIRENA FREEWINDS - DEPT.	**** 07.00 ****	18.00 16.00 22.15	C B E	- 1 -
MON	02	BRITANNIA	09.00	18.00	C	1
TUE	03	CARNIVAL VISTA OASIS OF THE SEAS	13.00 08.00	23.00 21.00	C I	1 1
WED	04	EVIRIMA FREEWINDS	08.00 06.00	**** ****	C E	1 1
THU	05	SEABOURN OVATION EVIRIMA - DEPT. AIDALUNA	08.00 **** 08.00	21.00 19.00 18.00	B C I	1 - 1
FRI	06	AZAMARA JOURNEY CARNIVAL LIBERTY	13.00 09.00	22.00 22.00	B C	1 1
SAT	07	NORWEGIAN GEM AIDAPERLA	07.00 10.00	21.00 ****	C I	1 1
SUN	08	CELEBRITY BEYOND NORWEGIAN JEWEL AIDAPERLA - Dept. FREEWINDS - DEPT.	09.00 14.00 **** ****	21.00 21.30 22.00 22.15	B C I E	1 1 - -

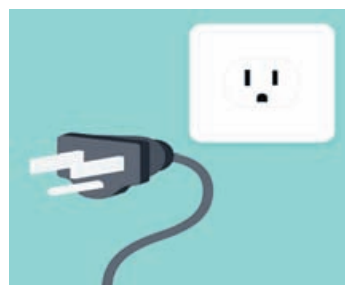
Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

Supermarket hours

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Electrical power



Drinking water



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7

Consumer Reports survey finds electric vehicle reliability improving but lagging gas models



A Toyota RAV4 Prime is displayed at the Pittsburgh International Auto Show in Pittsburgh, Feb. 15, 2024.

Associated Press

By **TOM KRISHER**
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — The reliability of electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids has dramatically improved, narrowing a wide gap with gas-powered automobiles, according to the latest survey by Consumer Reports. But vehicles with internal combustion engines and gas-electric hybrids are still far more dependable, the survey found. Consumer Reports subscribers, who filled out surveys during much of 2024, reported that electric vehicles had 42% more problems than gas autos on average. But that was down from 79% more in the 2023 survey. The survey released Thursday measured reliability of vehicles mainly from

the 2022, 2023 and 2024 model years. Plug-ins, which travel a short distance on battery power before a hybrid powertrain kicks in, had 70% more problems than gas vehicles, but that was less than half the difference found in last year's survey. The reason for the improvement? EV and plug-in technology are maturing, said Jake Fisher, head of Consumer Reports' automobile test center. "As the automakers get more experience with the new technologies and new platforms, they will improve," Fisher said. He said he expects plug-in and electric vehicles to keep getting better, further closing the gap with gas

vehicles. But one thing may stand in the way: Automakers often test new automation and other features on EVs, and the new stuff is prone to glitches. "Until we get to where an EV is just a car that does practical things with their own powertrain, I'm not sure they'll ever catch up totally" to gas vehicles, Fisher said. The new technology may offer more than the next wave of EV buyers would like, as EVs move from early adopters to more practical mainstream buyers, Fisher said. "There are people who just want a car that's easy to maintain," he said. "I don't use gas. I don't need this automation feature and electric door handles or whatever the heck they are putting out." Consumer Reports has noted that concerns about EV and plug-in quality add to issues that may have buyers hesitating before switch-

ing from gasoline engines, including concerns about higher up-front costs, too few charging stations and long charging times. Gas-electric hybrids, which switch from internal combustion to electric power to get better mileage, were about as reliable as cars with combustion engines. □



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2 Bed Garden view \$17,500
3 Bed Ocean view \$34,000
WK 51 Ocean view \$65,000
WK 52 Ocean View \$65,000
WK 7 and 14 - all views

GOLD SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$18,000
2 Bed Oceanside \$14,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$13,500
2 Bed Garden view \$12,000
3 Bed Ocean view \$30,000

Marriott Aruba Ocean Club PLATINUM SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront \$45,000
2 Bed Ocean view \$29,000
1 Bed Ocean front \$21,000
1 Bed Ocean View \$17,000

GOLD SEASON

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1 Bed Ocean View \$11,500

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
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Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
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RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
f @arubatoday

Q&A: Binoche and Fiennes on reuniting for 'The Return' and fighting for meaningful movies

By **LINDSEY BAHR**
AP Film Writer

Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche became friends while playing lovers in "Wuthering Heights." A few years later, they would share the screen again in Anthony Minghella's "The English Patient," that historical epic that would take them all the way to the Oscars.

They've kept in touch in the years since, fused by those early experiences and their admiration for one another's minds and processes. There were dinners and phone calls and trips to catch one another on the stage. Binoche went to see him in "Macbeth." He went to see her in "Antigone."

But they hadn't managed to work together again until now. And, appropriate for the occasion, the story is an epic: the reunion of Odysseus and Penelope.

"We're very, very, very good friends," Fiennes said. "There's a trust, there's a bond, there's a respect. There's the love of friends and we celebrate each other's work."

"The Return," in theaters Friday, has been a passion project for director and co-writer Uberto Pasolini, who worked on it on and off for some 30 years (longer than Odysseus' entire journey, he noted).

"I thought I was too old,"



Juliette Binoche, left, and Ralph Fiennes pose for a portrait to promote the film "The Return" on Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024, in New York.

Fiennes said. "He said, 'No, no, no, no, you're there. This is your last year.'"

Binoche and Fiennes spoke to The Associated Press about the enduring appeal of Homer's story, their process and the value of fighting for provocative cinema. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: What was the allure of taking this on at this stage?

FIENNES: I've been fascinated by Odysseus since I was a young boy and my mother read me the Greek myths. I think it's something about coming home and having the courage and the sort of sense of des-

tiny to take what is yours, to clarify what you have. There are great symbols at work in this piece.

Uberto had shared this with me for some time and we got to the point of, well, when are we going to do this? And who should play Penelope? And I said, "It must be Juliette Binoche." And he said, "Don't you think it should be Juliette Binoche?" And I said, "That's just what I said. Uberto, it has to be Juliette Binoche."

BINOCHÉ: On another interview, he didn't want to say that he chose me. And I said, "Why don't you say

it?" So now he's saying that three times. I'm so happy.

FIENNES: It wasn't long before Juliette Binoche was the only person on the planet who could play Penelope.

BINOCHÉ: I didn't ask that much.

FIENNES: I'm saying that. You can't say that. I can.

AP: It's on the record forever now. How do you prepare to embody these iconic characters?

BINOCHÉ: You prepared more than I did. Ralph was really training like crazy for it. As for me, you want to be present and allow truth in the moment and make

these figures, these big myths, these archetypes real. Uberto was quite controlling because he wanted to succeed so much with this film, he wanted it to be so close to his dream. We had to relax him in a way so we would have space to engage in this acting moment between us. We wanted to give something special to the film so people would experience as a spectator something ancient and yet very truthful and modern.

FIENNES: We felt strongly that once we were going to do it, we were on this shared road. You have the baggage of these two archetypes, symbols that are heightened, mythical. Our job is to make them human.

We felt the pressure of that all the time and we were hungry to do it and wanted it. It was a conversation: Please don't over-define every second of how you're going to shoot this because we will get to a place where our combined energies will hopefully send you messages about how you want to shoot it.

AP: You're both working a lot and playing really rich roles, "The Taste of Things" and "Conclave" just from releases this year. People tend to be very dark about the state of the industry and yet there are still wonderful films being made. □

Taylor Swift 'Eras' tie-in book is a smash, selling more than 800,000 copies in first weekend



Taylor Swift performs during the opening show of the Toronto dates of The Eras Tour on Thursday, November 14, 2024.

Associated Press

By **HILLEL ITALIE**
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Just one retail chain was enough for Taylor Swift to have the top-selling book last week and the biggest publishing launch of 2024.

According to Circana, Swift's "Eras Tour Book" sold 814,000 copies over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Circana tracks around 85% of the print market, but the "Eras" numbers are more precise: Swift sold the book exclusively through Target, which launched the "Eras" tie-in on Black Friday. Sales soared even as Swift skipped Amazon.com and other retailers and as some fans complained online that the \$39.99 book included typos and other errors. Representatives for Target and Swift did not

immediately respond to requests Wednesday for comment.

The sales put Swift in rare company. The only bigger nonfiction launch was the first volume of Barack Obama's presidential memoirs, "A Promised Land," which sold 816,000 copies its first week on shelves in 2020, according to Circana, which does not include audio and e-book sales. But Obama's memoir was available through all major outlets and Circana's tracking for "Eras Tour Book" accounts only for its first weekend sales. Swift has arranged exclusive, non-traditional releases before. For her "Eras" concert film, which came out in 2023, she bypassed Hollywood studios and worked directly with AMC Theatres and Cinemark Theatres. □

Lionel Messi wins MLS MVP award, the latest trophy on a long list of honors for the Inter Miami star

By TIM REYNOLDS

AP Sports Writer

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)

— It was a rare instance of Lionel Messi stepping on a soccer field and having no idea what was happening. There they were, more than 250 Inter Miami academy players, a slew of kids lined up at midfield in a formation that spelled out three letters: MVP. And when Messi saw his children, he realized they were holding a trophy.

That's how Messi learned he was Major League Soccer's best player in 2024.

Messi is the MLS MVP, even after a season where he missed 15 of Inter Miami's 34 regular-season matches with injuries or commitments to Argentina's national team. He factored into a league-high 36 goals scoring 20, assisting on 16 others for the highest rate per 90 minutes in MLS history.

"Truly, it is an honor for me to receive this award from all of you," Messi told the academy players.

MLS revealed the voting results Friday. Messi edged out Columbus Crew forward Cucho Hernández for the award, which is determined by a poll of players, club technical staff and



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi runs after scoring against Orlando City during the second half of an MLS soccer match Saturday, March 2, 2024, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

select media members. The club voters preferred Hernández over Messi by a slight margin; Messi was the choice of 41% of players and 43% of media.

"Unless you're living in the world of global football, it's hard to imagine the overall appeal and the massive popularity and stardom that Leo Messi has," said MLS Commissioner Don Garber, who was also at Inter Miami's stadium for the

surprise MVP presentation that occurred Wednesday night. "I mean, he is Michael Jackson meeting Taylor Swift and he's playing in our league."

Messi wound up with 38.4% of the average vote, while Hernández got 33.7%. Portland Timbers midfielder Evander (9.2%), D.C. United's Christian Benteke (7.1%), and Messi's Inter Miami teammate Luis Suárez (2.2%) rounded out the top

five in the voting.

Messi's win capped a 2024 campaign where he led Inter Miami to the Supporters Shield and best regular season record in MLS history, plus captained Argentina to a Copa America title. Inter Miami fell in Round 1 of the MLS Cup playoffs.

"I would have liked to receive this award in another situation, being able to play the (MLS Cup) final next Saturday," Messi

said. "But that's also what football is about, overcoming yourself every day. We had a big dream of being MLS champions this year. It didn't happen, but next year we'll come back stronger to try again."

The MLS MVP named for Landon Donovan is yet another entry on the absurdly long list of career honors for Messi. He's an eight-time Ballon d'Or winner, eight-time FIFA player of the year winner, a seven-time Spanish league MVP, past UEFA player of the year, past Champions League player of the season, World Cup golden ball winner, Club World Cup golden ball winner, and the list goes on and on and on from there. Best player ever? It's tough to argue. Some of the academy players even got to address Messi at the trophy presentation, telling him why he's their MVP.

"Hi Leo, you are my MVP because you have been my idol since I was a child and seeing you here in person every day is truly incredible," Inter Miami under-19 player Victor Fung told him. "Thank you for giving us so many unforgettable memories ... thank you for everything." □

No Bevo? SEC tells Texas there's no room for its 1,700-pound longhorn at title game vs. Georgia

ATLANTA (AP) — The Southeastern Conference championship game will not feature another mascot showdown.

The league said there wasn't enough space on the sideline at Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta for No. 2 Texas to bring along its 1,700-pound longhorn Bevo XV.

The Longhorns are facing No. 5 Georgia in the title game Saturday.

The teams have two of college football's most famous mascots. There should be enough sideline space for Georgia's pure white English bulldog, the much-smaller Uga XI.

Before the 2019 Sugar Bowl at the Superdome in New Orleans, Bevo XV toppled his barrier and began to charge at Uga X, who was Uga XI's predecessor as the Bulldogs' mascot. Texas handlers were able to pull back Bevo before the massive animal caused any harm.

That won't be an issue in Atlanta.

"When we received the request for Bevo to be on the sideline in Mercedes-Benz Stadium, our staff looked at several alternatives including the sideline location," said Chuck Dunlap, an SEC spokesman. "The reality is there is limited sideline space at the stadium. We can't jeopardize the safety of Bevo or the game participants."

In addition to the crowded sidelines, Mercedes-Benz Stadium also features field-level suits right behind the benches.

"With the narrow sidelines, location of multiple sets for television and camera carts, there is not enough space," Dunlap said. "While we want to honor tradition across the conference, the space limitation is a reality." □



Texas mascot Bevo is guided to the field before an NCAA college football game between Texas and Kentucky in Austin, Texas, Saturday, Nov. 23, 2024.

Associated Press

NFL's next coaching cycle will feature an impressive list of candidates: Analysis

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

The next NFL coaching cycle will feature an impressive list of candidates ranging from proven champions to up-and-coming coordinators.

Six-time Super Bowl winner Bill Belichick heads the list of well-known names that includes 2021 AP Coach of the Year Mike Vrabel. Don't count out Pete Carroll, and Robert Saleh could get another chance quickly.

Lions offensive coordinator Ben Johnson, Buccaneers OC Liam Cohen, Bills OC Joe Brady and Eagles OC Kellen Moore are among a lengthy list of young offensive-minded coaches who will garner plenty of interest. Lions DC Aaron Glenn, Dolphins DC Anthony Weaver, Chargers DC Jesse Minter and Panthers DC Ejiro Evero are among the coaches on the other side of the ball who'll receive attention.

Several former head coaches currently serving as coordinators also should be in the mix, including



New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick twirls his whistle during an NFL football practice, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2019, in Foxborough, Mass.

Associated Press

Chiefs defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo, Steelers OC Arthur Smith, Vikings DC Brian Flores, Broncos DC Vance Joseph and Commanders OC Kliff Kingsbury. Potential college head coaches who could jump to the NFL include Notre Dame's Marcus Freeman and USC's Lincoln Riley. Of course, most college

coaches say they're not going anywhere. Riley made that known Wednesday. Deion Sanders already said he's not leaving Colorado but never say never. The Jets, Saints and Bears already fired their coaches. More teams will make a change. Since 2019, there have been 43 coaching changes. Sixteen of those

coaches have already been fired, one retired and a few more could be on their way out.

Of the 43 hired over the past six coaching cycles, 10 previously were NFL head coaches and two were college head coaches. Of the remaining 31 hires, 25 were coordinators. Jerod Mayo (inside linebackers coach), Dan Campbell (tight ends coach), David Culley (passing game coordinator) and Zac Taylor (quarterbacks coach) made the leap from an assistant role. Antonio Pierce went from linebackers coach to interim coach to head coach in Las Vegas.

Eight teams hired new coaches after last season. The three teams who chose guys who were previous head coaches are currently sitting in a playoff position. Jim Harbaugh and the Los Angeles Chargers (8-4) hold the fifth seed in the AFC. Dan Quinn and the Washington Commanders (8-5) have the seventh spot in the NFC. Raheem Mor-

ris and the Atlanta Falcons (6-6) are tied for first in the NFC South with Tampa Bay but hold the tiebreaker because of a season sweep. Rookie head coach Mike Macdonald has the Seattle Seahawks (7-5) sitting in first place in the NFC West.

The remaining first-year coaches are struggling. Pierce, Mayo, Brian Callahan (Titans) and Dave Canales (Panthers) are 11-38 combined.

A closer look at one coach from each category:

Former coach Belichick is the biggest name of all, and drew headlines Thursday with news that he interviewed with the University of North Carolina for its coaching vacancy. Though he'll turn 73 before the start of the 2025 season, he's eager to get back on the job. Belichick needs to win 27 more games to break Don Shula's record for most regular-season victories. He's 15 wins away from passing Shula for all-time victories, including the postseason. □

Hall of Famer Randy Moss is stepping away from ESPN for an extended time to deal with health issue

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

Hall of Fame wide receiver Randy Moss is stepping away from his ESPN analyst role for an extended

time to focus on a personal health challenge, the network said in a statement.

The 47-year-old Moss revealed last week that he's dealing with a health issue and asked fans to pray for him and his family.

Moss made his announcement on Instagram from the set of the network's "Sunday NFL Countdown" show. He directed his message to men and urged them to get checkups and bloodwork done, without specifying any particular illness. "I just ask for all the prayer warriors to put their blessing hands on me and my family through these hard times. People were talking about my eyes last week," Moss said before putting on a pair of sunglasses. □



Broadcaster Randy Moss sits on the sideline before an NFL football game between the San Francisco 49ers and the Los Angeles Rams, Monday, Nov. 15, 2021, in Santa Clara, Calif.

Associated Press

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